A

MODEST EXAMINATION

OF THE

AUTHORITY and REASONS

Of the Late

DECREE

OF THE

Vice-Chancellor of *OXFORD*,

AND

Some HEADS of Colleges and Halls;

CONCERNING

The Heresy of Three Distinct Infinite Minds in the Holy and Ever-blessed Trinity.

By WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D.
Dean of St. *Paul's*, Master of the *Temple*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

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Printed for W. Rogers, at the *Sun* against St. *Dunstan's* Church in *Fleetstreet*. MDCXCVI.

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A
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OF THE
Oxford Decree, &c.

NO Man has a truer Honour and Reverence for that Great and Learned Body of the University of *Oxford*, nor has paid more just Civilities and Respects to any of the Heads or Members of it, as I have happened to be acquainted with them, than my self; which makes it very uneasy to me, that there should be the least appearance of any Quarrel or Disrespect on either side.

I can despise a Thousand *Jacobite* Stories, even with all the Additional Comments and Flourishes of a Malicious Animadverter; and justify my Neglect and Silence, to my self, who am most nearly concerned in it: For many of those Stories I can only deny, because I know nothing of them, but only this, that according to my Principles and Inclinations, it was morally impossible that I should say or do such things: And what I do remember any thing of, is falsly reported; and yet can-

not be rectified without betraying the Privacies of Converſation, as my Accuſers have done, and reflecting ſharply upon ſome who have been old Friends, whatever they are now; which are ſuch hateful Vices, and ſo deſtructive to the Innocent Freedoms of Converſation, that nothing but abſolute neceſſity can juſtify or apologize for the leaſt approaches to them. But the Charge of Hereſy is of a different nature, eſpecially conſidering my Profeſſion, Character, and Station in the Church, which will not admit of a Complemental Silence: That if it ſhould be thought too bold and daring to enter the Liſts with theſe *Oxford* Heads, that force and neceſſity which they themſelves have put upon me, and which a very modeſt man neither can nor ought to reſiſt, I hope will excuſe it.

But how come I to be concerned in this Decree, which only cenſures one of their own Members, for ſome Paſſages in a Sermon about the Trinity; which, as it is ſaid, *gave juſt occaſion of Offence and Scandal to many?* How many were offended, I can't tell; whether they had juſt cauſe of Offence, ſhall be examined preſently; but how much ſoever they were offended, they did not think it deſerved ſuch a Cenſure: For when a Warm Zealot promoted a Petition to the Vice-Chancellor for a Cenſure, he could perſuade but one Maſter of Arts to ſubſcribe it.

But though this Decree was occaſioned by this *Oxford* Preacher, yet every one knew as ſoon as they ſaw it or heard of it, that it was aimed againſt me: I'm ſure theſe Gentlemen knew very well what work there has been made with *Three Diſtinct Infinite Minds or Spirits.* The Animadverter had railed himſelf out of breath, and then calls for a *Decretum Oxonienſe* to help him; which was the wiſeſt thing he could do; for his

Reaſon

Reaſon will never do any hurt; but ſuch a *Decretum* might furniſh him with new Topicks of Railing. It happen'd as luckily for the purpoſe as if it had been contrived, that this Preacher uſed ſome of the ſame Expreſſions which I had done, and which the Animadverter had charged with Tritheiſm, *viz. Three Diſtinct Infinite Minds and Spirits.* This was an Opportunity not to be neglected, to obtain his deſired Decree: Dr. *South* ſollicited the Cauſe with ſuch Zeal and Importunity, as could not be reſiſted; and, as I am informed, prepared the way for it in a furious Sermon the *Sunday* before, wherein he upbraided them, as being afraid to condemn Hereſy, *Deiſm, Socinianiſm, Tritheiſm, leſt they ſhould fall from Eccleſiaſtical Grace, and the door of Preferment ſhould be ſhut againſt them*; which was a very civil Complement both to them and to the Governors of our Church. Some of the wiſeſt Heads among them, and who were moſt concerned in a Decree of Hereſy, were abſent; others abſented themſelves; and ſome who were preſent in the Convention, diſſented, alledging, That their Proceedings were Irregular, and not according to their Statutes. But ſome of the Animadverters Complexion and Intereſt, with great Zeal over-ruled the reſt, and the Decree was paſt, and printed in *Latin*, in theſe words:

In Conventu D. Vice-Cancellarii & Prefectorum Collegiorum & Aularum Universitatis Oxon. Die Vicesimo quinto Novembris. A. D. 1695.

CUM in Concione nuper habitâ coram Universitate Oxon. in Templo S. Petri in Oriente, ad Festum SS. Simonis & Judæ proximè elapsum, hæc Verba, inter alia, publice prolata & asserta fuerunt, *viz.* [*There are Three Infinite distinct Minds and Substances in the Trinity.*] Item [*That the Three Persons in the Trinity are Three Distinct Infinite Minds or Spirits, and Three Individual Substances.*] Quæ verba multis justam offensionis Causam & Scandalum dedêre:

Dominus Vice-Cancellarius & Præfecti Collegiorum & Aularum, in generali suo Conventu jam congregati, Judicant, Declarant, & Decernunt, prædicta Verba esse *Falsa, Impia, & Hæretica*; Dissona & Contraria Doctrinæ Ecclesiæ Catholicæ, & speciatim Doctrinæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, publicè receptæ.

Quapropter præcipiunt & firmiter injungunt Omnibus & singulis, eorum fidei & curæ commissis, ne tale aliquod Dogma, in Concionibus, aut aliàs, in posterum proferant.

Ex Decreto Domini Vice-Cancellarii & Prefectorum

Ben. Cooper *Not. publicus*
& Registrarius Universitatis Oxon.

Whoever drew up this Decree, ſome Criticks ſay he need not brag much of his Skill in *Latin*, having tranſgreſſed the plain Rules of *Grammar*, in uſing *Eorum fidei & curæ*, for *ſuæ*.

But this *Latin* Decree did not ſatisfy the Animadverter, but for the Benefit and Edification of *Engliſh* Readers, he (as is eaſy to gueſs) Tranſlates it, and adds a notable Title, and a notable Remark to it.

The Title is, *An Account of the Decree of the Univerſity of* Oxford, *againſt ſome Heretical Tenets.*

The Remark by way of Poſtſcript is, *It may be noted, That the Propoſitions above-mentioned are Dr.* S——k's *in his Diſcourſe of the Trinity, and the Defenders of it, and wrote againſt by the Animadverter*, &c. which is as good *Engliſh* as the other is *Latin*: And yet this did not ſatisfy him, till he had publiſhed this *Oxford* Decree againſt Dr. *Sherlock* in one of the Weekly Prints. *Spectatum admiſſi!* Certainly he thinks there is no ſtanding againſt this *Oxford* Decree; and therefore in the firſt place let us briefly examine the Authority of it.

He calls it, *The Decree of the Univerſity of* Oxford; which is a mere Sham; for ſome Heads of Colleges and Halls were never yet thought *the Univerſity of Oxford*: But that Great and Learned Body, if they will vindicate their own Rights, are more concerned in this than I am. The Decree of an *Oxford* Convocation is indeed *Decretum Oxonienſe*, or a Decree of the Univerſity of *Oxford*: This is what the Animadverter called for, and this he would perſuade the world he has; but let the *Oxford* Convocation look to this, which may prove an ill Preſident.

But I am inform'd (for I confeſs I know not their Statutes my ſelf) that this Decree of *the Heads of Colleges and Halls*, is ſo far from being *the Decree of the*

Univerſity

Univerſity of Oxford, that it is no Judicial nor Authoritative Decree at all; not ſo much as for cenſuring a Preacher, much leſs for declaring and decreeing Hereſy. Their Statutes refer ſuch Cenſures to the Vice-Chancellor, and Six Heads, Doctors of Divinity, and to one or both the Profeſſors of Divinity; but give no ſuch Authority to the General Meeting of the Heads, much leſs to Heads, who are no Divines, nor Doctors in Divinity; and ſome ſuch there were in this Meeting. So that this pretended *Decree of the Univerſity of Oxford*, is no more than the private Opinions of ſome Heads; and if that be ſo Venerable an Authority, I will undertake any day in the Year, to procure a Meeting of twice as many, as Wiſe and Learned Men, to cenſure their Decree. But ſuppoſing their Authority to be Juſt and Regular, there is another very proper Queſtion, How far their Authority extends? Whether to the declaring and decreeing Hereſy? Whatever the Convocation of the Univerſity may challenge, this was never before pretended to by the Heads of Colleges and Halls.

All the Authority I can learn their Statutes give them in ſuch Caſes, is to ſummon the Preacher, who has ſaid any thing in his Sermon contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, and to require a publick recantation from him, or to forbid him ever to preach again in the *Univerſity*: Whereas nothing of all this was done; the Preacher not ſummoned to this Meeting, nor his Name, as far as I can learn, once mentioned in it; no Recantation enjoined; no Prohibition of his Preaching again: But inſtead of this, which was their proper Buſineſs, they declare and decree Hereſy, which ſo many Maſters of Arts might have done with as good Authority, whereever they had

had met. And they ought, (notwithſtanding all their Zeal againſt Hereſy) to have adviſed with men of Skill, how far ſuch an Irregular and Unſtatutable proceeding might affect them.

The Authority of declaring and making Hereſy, may be of ſuch pernicious Conſequence to the Peace of any Church, that it is not fit to be intruſted with any Body of men leſs then a National Synod; for otherwiſe we may have as many different and contrary Religions, as there are Declarers and Decreers of Hereſy.

In the Statute 1 *Eliz. ca.* 1. we find *the power to order, determine, or adjudge any matter or cauſe to be Hereſy*, reſtrained only *to ſuch as heretofore have been determined, ordered, or adjudged to be Hereſy by the Authority of the Canonical Scriptures: Or by the firſt Four General Councils; Or by any other General Council, wherein the ſame was declared Hereſy by the expreſs and plain words of the ſaid Canonical Scriptures: Or ſuch as hereafter ſhall be ordered, judged, or determined to be Hereſy, by the High Court of Parliament of this Realm, with the Aſſent of the Clergy* in their Convocation. And if the King could not grant a greater Authority than this to his High Commiſſioner for Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, it is not likely that any other Body of men have it; and my Lord *Coke* ſays, That this is a direction to others, eſpecially to Biſhops in their adjudging Hereſy, 3 *Inſtit. pa.* 40. and how they have obſerved this Law in their Decree, they had beſt conſider.

Oxford Reaſons have formerly had a very juſt Veneration paid to them, and will have ſo ſtill, whenever they are penned with the ſame ſtrength and clearneſs; but they have a greater Opinion of their Authority,

rity, than I can find the reſt of the world has, if they think by a meer Decree, without pretending to give the leaſt reaſon for it, to ſilence all diſputes, and to bear down all Reaſons, and all Authorities on the other ſide.

But ſince theſe Heads are pleaſed to take part in the quarrel, which one would have thought they need not have done, had they not ſuſpected the Succeſs of their Animadverting Champion; I accept this exchange with all thankfulneſs. As for the Animadverter, he might for me have writ on as long as he pleaſed, and have railed and triumphed as much as he pleaſed, and the world might have judged of him, and his performances, as they pleaſed: His laſt Book I have read nothing of, and could never perſuade my ſelf to read all his firſt Book; there is ſuch an Evil Spirit and ſuch Venom in his Writings, as is enough to give an Unchriſtian Tincture to thoſe who read them: He reſolved never to anſwer any one but my ſelf; and I reſolved never to read what he writ; and thus there was ſome hope to ſee an end of this matter, when he grew weary of writing, or his Bookſeller of Printing. But now I hope to meet with no new Animadverters, who ſhall all fare alike with me; but with Men of Ingenuity and Candor, good Learning, and good Tempers, who will reaſon without Sophiſtry and Miſrepreſentations, weigh Authorities in an equal Balance, and contend for Truth, not for Victory; and then it is indifferent to me whether I overcome, or am overcome; for Truth is better than Victory, and will make an Honeſt Man triumph in being conquered.

Having thus conſidered the Authority of this Decree, which the Animadverter ſo much glories in, let us now examine the Decree it ſelf.

Theſe

These words, *Three distinct Infinite Minds*, and *Three Substances*, as applied to the Three Persons of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, are singled out in this Decree, and parted from the Body of the Sermon, without any thing to explain in what sense the Preacher used them; and therefore we must conclude, that these Words are absolutely condemned, as *False, Impious, and Heretical*: That though a *Mind* in this place signifies *an Intelligent Person*; and *Substance* a *Substantial Person*; and Three Infinite Intelligent Persons, and Three Infinite Substantial Persons, is the Catholick Faith; as I doubt not to make appear; yet Three Distinct Infinite Minds, and Three Substances, when they are used in no other sense, than for three Intelligent and Substantial Persons, must be condemned *as Impious and Heretical*. These are wonderful nice Criticks, to make the same Doctrine, owned and acknowledged to be the same, in one Form of Words to be truly Catholick and Orthodox, and in another Form of Words, which do and are intended to signify the same thing, *False, Impious, and Heretical*: This is a strange Magical Power of Words; *Hoc est Corpus* in the mouth of a Popish Priest, never were pretended to make a more Miraculous Transubstantiation. I wish it at last appear that these Gentlemen do really believe Three Infinite Intelligent Persons, and Three Substantial Persons in the Trinity; for let them distinguish as subtilly as they please, an Intelligent Person is a Mind, and a Substantial Person is a Substance, and Three are Three; of which more presently.

There may indeed be a very Heretical Sense put upon these words: to say, That there are Three Infinite Minds or Persons (for the Heresy is the same, whatever the word be) wholly divided and separated from each other, Τρεῖς μεμερισμέναι οὐσίαι; Three Ab-

solute Principles, Independent on each other, Τρεῖς ἀρχαί; Three Unbegotten ones, without any relation to each other, as Father, Son, and Spirit; Τρία ἀγέννητα: Three Substances in the *Arian* Notion, for Three distinct Kinds and Species of Substance; or Three Natures and Essences specifically different: All this, I say, is False, Impious, and Heretical, and has been condemned as such by the Catholick Church. And could they have affix'd any such Sense as this on the Preacher's Words, they would have done well to have shewn it; and then they had done very justly and religiously, in condemning such an Impious Sense of these Words: but to condemn Words, in themselves very Orthodox, as Impious and Heretical, without giving the least Intimation wherein their Impiety and Heresy consists, is a new way of proceeding, which they never learnt from any of the Ancient Councils. But Party-*Shibboleths* always do the best Execution, the less they are understood.

The Charge is drawn up as fully and emphatically as it is possible. 1. That these aforesaid Words are False. 2. That they are Impious. 3. Heretical. 4. Contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholick Church. And 5. In particular contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as publickly received. This they Judge, Declare, and Determine; and had they Proved it too, they had done all at once; but now the hardest part still remains; and men who will not take their bare word for it, will judge all over again. And I hope it will give no Offence to that Great and Learned Body of the University of *Oxford*, to examine the rash and hasty Judgment of some of the Heads of their Colleges and Halls.

Judicant, declarant, & decernunt, prædicta verba esse falsa, impia, & hæretica; dissona & contraria doctrinæ Ecclesiæ Catholicæ, & speciatim doctrinæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, publice receptæ.

In order to this, I shall briefly premise some few plain Ob-

Obſervations, the more effectually to ſhew the Raſhneſs and Injudiciouſneſs of this Decree.

As 1. That no form of words is to be condemned as *Falſe, Impious, and Heretical*, which do not neceſſarily and manifeſtly contain a *Falſe, Impious, and Heretical Senſe*: Words may be new, unuſual, inconvenient, and want the ſtamp of Eccleſiaſtical Authority, which are not *Falſe, Impious, or Heretical*. Theſe are very different Crimes, to broach new Words, and new Hereſies, when the Words themſelves are not manifeſtly Heretical: And certainly ſuch men ought to have underſtood this, who take upon them to be Judges of Hereſy.

Nay, *2dly*. Such new forms of ſpeech as are liable to an Heretical ſenſe, are not therefore to be rejected, if they are of uſe to ſecure the True Catholick Faith, and thoſe who uſe them declare the Orthodox ſenſe wherein they uſe them. All learned men know, that the *Homouſion* it ſelf was charged with as many Hereſies as any other word can well be: Some charged it with *Sabellianiſm*; others with a diviſion and partition of the Divine Subſtance; as if the Son's being begotten of his Father's Subſtance, and ſo being Conſubſtantial, or of one Subſtance with him, ſignified ſuch an Efflux and Emanation as divided the Father's Subſtance, and communicated part of it to the Son: But when the Catholick Fathers rejected theſe perverſe and Heretical ſenſes of the word, and declared in what ſenſe they uſed it, in oppoſition to the *Arian* Hereſy, and that it was the moſt ſignificant word which could be uſed to that purpoſe, and which thoſe ſubtle Hereticks, who equivocated in all other forms of words, could by no means elude, the *Nicene* Council received it into their Creed; and *Euſebius* of *Caſarea*, and ſome others, who at firſt ſcrupled the uſe of that word, ſubſcribed to it, when they were ſatis-

fied of its Orthodox signification. It is reasonable for all men to consider this, who pretend to find Heresy in words, Whether those who use them, own that Heretical sense which they charge upon them; for otherwise they may as well condemn the *Homoousion*, as False, Impious, and Heretical, as *Three distinct Infinite Minds and Spirits*, if they have no regard to the sense of those who use these words, nor to the end for which they are used.

3. And if we will ever allow of Unscriptural Words to explain and secure the Catholick Faith, (which none but secret or open Hereticks ever quarrel'd at) there may be the same reason and necessity for it in our Age, that ever there was in any Age of the Christian Church; and then it is as justifiable now, as ever it was. The Church never had Authority to make a new Faith, but always had, and always will have, Authority to declare and explain the True Catholick Faith in such words as are most aptly expressive of it, and necessary to countermine the Arts and Evasions of Hereticks.

This Apology the *Nicene* Fathers made for putting the *Homoousion* into their Creed, as St. *Athanasius* declares at large, in his Book *de decretis Synodi Nicænæ*. The *Arians* made a shift to reconcile their Heresy to all other Forms of words, but the *Homoousion* detected their Hypocrisy and Heresy: This was too plain and express to be evaded by equivocal senses, and therefore they could never be reconciled to it; and the Catholick Fathers thought that a very necessary reason for the use of it.

Now if such expressions as these, *Three distinct Infinite Minds and Spirits, or Three Substances*, be as necessary in our Age to detect and oppose *Sabellianism*, and to secure the Catholick Faith of a Real, Substantial Trinity, (which is all that is intended by them) as the *Homoousion* was at the time of the *Nicene* Council, to detect

and

and oppoſe *Arianiſm*; this will juſtify the uſe of ſuch expreſſions, how novel ſoever they may be thought; and what neceſſity there is for this in our Age, will appear preſently.

4. It is a ſufficient juſtification of any Unſcriptural Forms of words in Articles of Faith, that though the expreſs words are not found in Scripture, yet all that is, and that is intended to be ſignified by thoſe words, is found in Scripture; for no words can be *falſe, impious, and heretical*, which contain the true Catholick Faith, as taught in Scripture: Thus *Athanaſius* and the other *Nicene* Fathers anſwer that *Arian* Objection againſt the *Homoouſion*, that it is not to be found in Scripture; that though the word is not in Scripture, the Faith ſignified by that word is; and thus St. *Auguſtine* particularly defends it in his diſpute with *Paſcentius*.

5. No Expreſſions can be ſaid to be contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, which have been uſed by Catholick Fathers, either in the ſame or in equivalent terms, and contain that Doctrine which the Catholick Fathers always taught.

Having premiſed this, let us now examine the Cenſure, which theſe *Oxford* Heads have made of theſe Propoſitions: *There are Three Infinite diſtinct Minds and Subſtances in the Trinity*; Item, *That the Three Perſons in the Trinity are* Three *diſtinct Infinite Minds or Spirits, and Three Individual Subſtances*. That is, I ſuppoſe, as much Individual Subſtances, as they are Individual Perſons.

It is evident, that all this relates only to the Notion of the Trinity, and to the Notion of a Divine Perſon, and of Three Divine Perſons in the Trinity; and therefore the Unity of the Godhead is not concerned in this, which belongs to another Queſtion, How theſe Three are One; of which more when I examine the *Hereſy* charged on theſe words.

1. But

1. But the firſt charge is, that they are *falſe*: I wiſh they had told us what in them is falſe; but ſince they have made no diſtinction, we muſt ſuppoſe they mean that all theſe words are falſe. Is it falſe then, that each Perſon in the Ever-Bleſſed Trinity is by himſelf in his own Perſon a Diſtinct, Infinite Mind, Spirit, or Subſtance? Is not God the Father an Infinite Mind or Spirit? Is not God the Son, the ſubſtantial Word and Wiſdom of the Father, an Infinite Mind or Spirit? Is not God the Holy Ghoſt, that Eternal Spirit, which knoweth the things of God, as the Spirit of a Man knoweth the things of a man, an Eternal Mind or Spirit? Or is not an Infinite Mind and Spirit a Subſtance, the moſt real perfect Subſtance, that is in the world, which gives Subſtance and Subſiſtence to all other things? Is not the Father conſidered as an Infinite Mind and Spirit, diſtinct from the Son and the Holy Ghoſt; the Son diſtinct from the Father and the Holy Ghoſt; the Holy Ghoſt diſtinct from the Father and the Son? To deny any thing of all this, is downright *Sabellianiſm*, and deſtroys a real ſubſtantial Trinity, which is as Eſſential to the Chriſtian Faith, as the Unity of the Godhead is.

The only Quarrel then, that I can imagine, againſt theſe words is this; That tho the Father be a diſtinct Infinite Mind, and the Son a diſtinct Infinite Mind, and the Holy Ghoſt a diſtinct Infinite Mind, yet according to the Catholick Form of Speech, we muſt not ſay that there are Three diſtinct Infinite Minds, but one Infinite Mind or Spirit or Subſtance: Now I grant that in the ſenſe of the *Homoouſion*, or Conſubſtantiality, this is very True and Orthodox, in which ſenſe St. *Jerom* condemned *Tres Subſtantias* or Three Subſtances; and St. *Auſtin*, who allowed that the Father is a Spirit, the Son a Spirit, and the Holy Ghoſt a Spirit, yet denied, that there are Three

Spirits,

Spirits, but One Spirit; but when we apply this to Persons, it is gross *Sabellianism* to say, that there are not Three Personal Minds, or Spirits, or Substances, but only One Mind Spirit, or Substance; for then there can be but one Person too, for one Personal Mind is but One Person.

Let us consider what a Mind is, and how we can know whether there be but One, or more distinct Minds. The Substance of a Mind I know nothing of, no more than I do what the naked Substance of Body or Matter is; but the true Notion of a Mind is a thinking Being, and therefore where ever we find the Acts of Knowledge, Understanding and Will, there is a Mind; and where there are distinct Personal Acts of Knowledge and Will, there are distinct Personal Minds.

Now if we believe the Scripture, the Father knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father; the Father wills, and the Son, by a distinct Personal act, wills with the Father, and what the Father wills; the Father works, and the Son works, and sees all that the Father doth, and doth the same things.

Thus the Fathers proved against the *Sabellians* the real and substantial distinction of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, from those distinct personal acts which are attributed in Scripture to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which having a mutual relation to each other, require distinct Persons for their Subjects; and since all the instances they give (as may be seen in *Tertullian* against *Praxeas*, *Novatian* in his Book of the Trinity, *Athanasius* against the *Sabellians*, St *Hilary*, St. *Austin*, and all that have writ on this Argument) are acts of a Mind, as well as of a Person, they must prove (if they prove any thing) distinct Minds as well as Persons; for if one singular Solitary Mind may be the Subject of such distinct acts as necessarily

rily ſuppoſe more than one, One Perſon may be ſo too; and then there is no poſſible way left to confute *Sabellianiſm*, or to prove a real Trinity of diſtinct ſubſtantial Perſons. It is very evident, that both the *Sabellians*, and the Catholick Fathers in this Controverſy underſtood the ſame thing by Perſon, which we do by Mind or Spirit; By Perſon the *Sabellians* meant ſuch a Perſon as is true and perfect God; and therefore the moſt real Subſtance, an Infinite Mind and Spirit; and for this reaſon they rejected Three Perſons for fear of Three Gods, which always was, and is ſtill the Objection againſt a real ſubſtantial Trinity; for there is no danger, that Three Names, or Notions, or Modes, ſhould be a Trinity of Gods. Notwithſtanding this, the Catholick Fathers allow their Notion of a Perſon, and prove againſt them ſuch a Trinity of Perſons as they rejected, each of which is true and perfect God.

Now ſince *Perſon* is the Catholick word, which long Eccleſiaſtical uſe has made familiar, I ſhould by no means allow of any other word in this Myſtery, could we retain the old Catholick Faith, together with the word: But when men make no more of a Perſon, than a meer Mode, and a Trinity of Modes in one ſingular Nature, and Subſtance, muſt paſs for a Trinity of Divine Perſons, which was the Hereſy of *Sabellius*, who contended for One Singular Solitary Nature or Subſiſtence in God, and was not much concerned by what name you called the Three, ſo they were not Three Subſtantial Subſiſting Perſons; for he never dreamt that there could be Three Real Subſtantial Perſons in One Singular Nature; I ſay, when this Hereſy is reviv'd under a new Name, we are under a neceſſity of ſaying in more expreſs words, what the Fathers meant by Perſon, if we will retain the Catholick Faith, as well as the Word.

Would

Would Men but give themſelves a little Liberty of thinking, they would ſee how impoſſible it is to find a *Medium* between a real *Trinity* and *Sabellianiſm*, however diſguis'd. The Three Perſons in the bleſſed *Trinity* are either Three Subſtantial Perſons, or they are not; to deny them to be Subſtantial is *Sabellianiſm*, whatever elſe we call them: There muſt be either One ſingular ſolitary Subſtance in the Deity, or Three diſtinct Perſonal Subſtances: The firſt is the fundamental Article of the *Sabellian* Creed, and a direct Contradiction to the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, for One ſingular, ſolitary Nature or Subſtance, is but One Perſon; for which reaſon the *Sabellians* ſo earneſtly contended for it, and the *Catholick* Fathers ſo vigorouſly oppos'd it: And if we own Three diſtinct ſubſtantial Perſons in the *Trinity*, we muſt own Three diſtinct perſonal Subſtances; for a diſtinct ſubſtantial Perſon muſt have a diſtinct Subſtance of his own, proper and peculiar to his own Perſon: that though the Father and the Son are of one Subſtance, as the Son is begotten of the Subſtance of the Father, and conſubſtantial with him; yet the perſonal Subſtance of the Son is no more the perſonal Subſtance of the Father, than the Father is the Perſon of the Son, or the Son the Perſon of the Father: and therefore there is a manifeſt *Sabellian* Fallacy in it, which it is impoſſible to make ſenſe of, to ſay, That the Father is an infinite Mind, the Son an infinite Mind, and the Holy Ghoſt an infinite Mind; that the Father is Subſtance, the Son Subſtance, the Holy Ghoſt Subſtance, and yet that there are not Three perſonal Minds, or Three perſonal Subſtances, but One ſingular Mind and Subſtance; for this is to be One and Three in the

ſame Senſe; which is not Myſtery, but Contradiction.

There has been a nice Diſpute about the ſingular and plural Predication, when we ſpeak of God; that ſince in the Unity of the Godhead there are Three and One, what it is we may call Three, and what One: This is the whole Pretence, as far as I can gueſs, for the *Oxford* Cenſure, that Minds and Subſtances are ſpoke of in the plural Number. Now this ſeems to me to be a very plain Caſe, that if in the ever Bleſſed *Trinity* there be Three and One, that wherein they are Three may be ſaid to be Three; but that wherein they are but One, muſt be ſaid to be but One; for otherwiſe Three are not Three, nor One One; which muſt either deſtroy the Faith of the *Trinity*, or of the *Unity*. That there are *Three Perſons, and One God*, is the Catholick Language; and therefore Three belongs to the Perſons, and One to the Godhead: And therefore whatever is abſolutely Eſſential to the Notion of a diſtinct Perſon, may be number'd and diſtinguiſh'd with the Perſons; for whatever is included in the Notion of a Perſon, though it be number'd with the Perſons, no more affects the Unity of the Godhead, than a Trinity of Perſons does. If then a Perſon be a Mind, a Spirit, a Subſtance, Three ſuch Perſons muſt be Three as diſtinct Minds, Spirits, or Subſtances, as they are diſtinct Perſons; and Three ſuch Perſonal Minds, Spirits, or Subſtances, are as reconcileable with the Unity of the Godhead, as Three ſubſtantial Perſons; for the *Three* belongs to the *Perſons*, who are Three, not to the Godhead, which is but One; of which more preſently.

As

As for that Phraſe of *Three individual Subſtances*, it ſeems more obnoxious, becauſe *individual* may ſignifie, and does in common uſe, more than barely *diſtinct*, even *a ſeparate* Subſtance, as all other individuals are; and an *Individual* carries with it a Relation to a *Species*; and though the ancient Fathers do indeed mention frequently a ſpecifick Unity of Nature in the Godhead, they did not confine the Unity of the Divine Nature to this, which is a meer Logical and Notional Unity: The Divine Nature is no *Species*, for it is but One, and therefore the Unity of the Godhead is the moſt real, eſſential, indiviſible, inſeparable Unity.

But how incautious ſoever the Expreſſion is, the Preacher ſeems to have had no ill meaning in it; and therefore this might have been corrected, but not ſo heavily cenſur'd, eſpecially ſince *Boethius* his Definition of a Perſon might have led him to it, *rationabilis naturæ individua ſubſtantia*, the *individual Subſtance* of a rational Nature: And if this may be allow'd a good Definition of a Divine Perſon, whatever belongs to the Definition of a Perſon, may be number'd and diſtinguiſhed with the Perſons.

2. Thus much for the firſt Charge, that theſe Words are *falſe*; the next is much heavier, That they are *impious*. Now there are but two things wherein the impiety of any Doctrine can conſiſt, either in teaching ſome Wickedneſs, or in reproaching and blaſpheming the Deity. Now what Wickedneſs does this Doctrine of a real ſubſtantial *Trinity*, a *Trinity* of Three infinite perſonal Minds, teach us? unleſs to worſhip Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt with the moſt humble and devout Adorations, be

impiety. This indeed it does teach us, and this we do, and this no other Notion of a *Trinity* can teach us, or juſtifie us in doing: For is any other *Trinity* but a real ſubſtantial *Trinity*, the Object of a religious Adoration? can we without impiety, diſtinctly worſhip, as we do in our Litany, three diſtinct Perſons, who are not each of them diſtinctly in their own Perſons, infinite Mind and Spirit? is *a Mode, a Poſture, a Somewhat*, without any name or notion belonging to it, the Object of Religious Worſhip? is it poſſible in the nature of the thing, for any man, who believes but one ſingular, ſolitary, divine Nature, to worſhip three with a diſtinct worſhip, without any conception of a real, ſubſtantial, diſtinction between them? Can any man honour the Son, as he honours the Father, as a diſtinct Object, and with diſtinct acts of worſhip, who does not believe the Son to be as truly and ſubſtantially a Divine Perſon, as the Father is, and as diſtinct a Perſon from the Father, as *Adam* and *Abel* were diſtinct Perſons, tho not ſeparate Perſons, as they were? Men may pleaſe themſelves with ſubtil diſtinctions, but they can never diſtinguiſh themſelves nor others out of their ſenſe and feeling; and I appeal to all Mankind, whether diſtinct Acts of worſhip do not require diſtinct Objects, as really diſtinct as their Worſhip is? whether they can diſtinctly worſhip, three Names, or Modes, or Somewhats, when there is but one real ſubſtantial Subject or *Suppoſitum* of them all? if they can, their Devotion is as airy, ſubtil, and unintelligible, as their Diſtinctions are.

Does this Doctrine then of a real ſubſtantial Trinity, of three infinite Perſonal Minds, reproach or blaſpheme the Deity? I do not now diſpute with the Antitrinitarian Hereticks, who are profeſſedly ſo, who charge the

the Doctrine it ſelf with Blaſphemy, but with thoſe who profeſs to believe a Trinity, but charge the Doctrine of a real, ſubſtantial Trinity with impiety; and therefore ſhall confine my ſelf only to them.

Is it any Reproach then to the Ever Bleſſed Trinity to affirm, that each Perſon is by himſelf a diſtinct infinite Mind? is an infinite Mind then a Term of Reproach and Blaſphemy? does not an infinite Mind ſignifie all the Perfections of a Deity? and is this Blaſphemy? I beſeech you againſt whom? againſt Father, Son, or Holy Ghoſt? and is not each of theſe Divine Perſons a diſtinct infinite Mind? or is it Blaſphemy to ſay, what they are? or when each of theſe Divine Perſons is a diſtinct infinite Mind, is it Blaſphemy to ſay, that three Divine Perſons are three diſtinct infinite Minds? that is, will the Three Divine Perſons of the ever Bleſſed Trinity, when each of them is, and is owned to be a diſtinct infinite Mind, think themſelves reproach'd to be call'd Three? and if the Divine Perſons will not think themſelves blaſphem'd by this, there is no danger that the Divine Nature ſhould: For the Divine Nature is whole and entire in each Divine Perſon, and there is no danger but three diſtinct infinite Minds muſt have the ſame One Divine Nature, for Infinite, Infinite, and Infinite, are but one and the ſame Infinite Nature. But as I take it, the danger of Blaſphemy is on the other ſide: for if they deny the Three Perſons of the Trinity to be three diſtinct infinite Minds, which of theſe Divine Perſons, Father, Son, or Holy Ghoſt, will they deny to be an Infinite Mind? for when we know him, we muſt ſtrike him out of the Trinity, as not being true and perfect God: Or if they allow *Perſon*

to ſignifie the ſame thing; when applied to the Father, to the Son, or to the Holy Ghoſt, then neither of theſe Perſons is a Divine Infinite Mind, or each of them is, and then there are *three*, as there are three Perſons, or there is never a Divine Infinite Mind among them all; the Conſequence of which is ſo blaſphemous, that I know not whether I may venture to ſay it, for fear the Animadverter ſhould ſerve me, as he has done once already, to make theſe Conſequences my own Doctrine: But yet I will tell theſe Gentlemen, what a bolder man, than I am, would venture to ſay upon this occaſion, that if a Divine Perſon, as a Perſon, and as diſtinct from the other Perſons, be not an Infinite Mind, there is an end of the Chriſtian Trinity, in which every Perſon is true and perfect God, which no Perſon is, who is not an Infinite Mind; and therefore if any one Perſon, conſidered in his diſtinct perſonal Capacity, be not an Infinite Mind, he does not belong to the Chriſtian Trinity; and if all the Perſons are in this reſpect alike, that not any one of them, in his diſtinct Perſonal Capacity, is a diſtinct Infinite Mind, then there is no Trinity at all; and if they will find a God, when they have renounced a Trinity, it muſt be one ſingular Divine Nature, which they themſelves will not allow to be a Perſon: And thus we have loſt a Trinity, and loſt a God, who is a Perſon. This is plain ſence, and I fear, neither *Thomas*, nor *Scotus*, can help them out.

But let us ſuppoſe (and I am ſure they ought to be thankful for ſuch a Suppoſition, for their Notion of a *Perſon* will not admit it, unleſs they underſtand one thing by a Perſon when apply'd to the Father, and another when apply'd to the Son, and Holy Spirit; but I ſay, let us ſuppoſe) that the Divine

vine Nature is originally in the Perſon of the Father, or that the Father is the Θεὸς ἀγέννητος, the unbegotten, ſelf-originated God, as he certainly is, and therefore a Divine ſubſtantial Perſon, who is eſſentially God: Now the very Name of Father is a relative Term, and ſignifies that he has a Son, begotten of himſelf; and let any Man conſider which ſounds moſt like Blaſphemy, both againſt the Father and the Son, to ſay, that the Father begets a Son, who is his own perfect Likeneſs and Image, the expreſs Character of his own Subſtance (ὑποστάσεως) of the ſame Subſtance with himſelf, but diſtinct in Subſtance, as Father and Son are, true and perfect God, as his Father is, without any other the leaſt difference, but that one is the Father, and the other the Son; or to ſay, that the Father begets no Subſtance at all, but only a Mode, or a Relation without a Relative, in his own Subſtance: That the Father begets Filiation, not a Son, but Sonſhip; is not this to ridicule the Divine Generation, and to make Sport for Atheiſts and Hereticks: If God begets no Subſtance, he begets nothing real, nothing ſubſtantially diſtinct from himſelf, and therefore no ſubſtantial Perſon; and then neither God is a true and real Father, nor the Son a real Son, which overthrows the whole Myſtery of our Redemption, by the Incarnation, Death, and Sufferings of the Son of God: For God was not incarnate, if the Divine Nature was not incarnate: And if there be but one ſingular divine Nature and Subſtance in the Deity, though they could find a Trinity of Perſons in this one ſingular Nature, the Incarnation of this one ſingular Nature is impoſſible, without the Incarnation of the whole Trinity. Men may wrangle as long

as

as they pleaſe about theſe Matters, but it is a manifeſt Contradiction to ſay, That the Divine Nature is incarnate in the Son, and is not incarnate in the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, when there is but one ſingular Divine Nature and Subſtance in them all; which is to ſay, that the ſame one ſingular Nature is incarnate and is not incarnate; and *is*, and *is not*, is a Contradiction, or there never can be a Contradiction. And now I leave it to all impartial Judges on which ſide the Impiety lies.

3. The third Charge is *Hereſie*: But if it be neither falſe, nor impious, I hope there is no Hereſie in it neither: However, they would have done well to have given this Hereſie a Name, that we might have known where to find it, who were the firſt Authors of it, in what Age of the Church it began, and by what General Councils it was condemn'd: For I can find no Hereſie in theſe cenſur'd Words, but the Hereſie of a real ſubſtantial Trinity, the Hereſie of three ſubſtantial Perſons, or of three Perſonal Minds and Subſtances; and I do not find any mention of this Hereſie in the ancient Records of the Church, unleſs thoſe who called themſelves Catholicks were theſe Heretick; for this was always their Doctrine, as ſome of our Modern Orthodox Zealots, and Hereſie-makers confeſs, and know not how to excuſe them from Hereſie upon this account. Well! if this be the Caſe, we muſt be contented to be Hereticks with all the ancient Fathers, and the four firſt General Councils: but theſe Gentlemen ſhould have remembred, that the Church of *England* requires them to expound Scripture, as the ancient Catholick Doctors expound it, and receives the four firſt General Councils, where

this

this Hereſie is in great Perfection; and it had not been amiſs, if ſome body had minded them, that the Laws of *England*, as I obſerv'd before, forbid the declaring any Doctrine to be Hereſie, which is not condemn'd for Hereſie in the four firſt General Councils.

But let Fathers and Councils, Canons, or Acts of Parliament ſay what they pleaſe, they have a greater and more venerable Authority than all of them: The Animadverter has told them it is Hereſie, and has told them what Hereſie it is, no leſs than the Hereſie of *Tritheiſm*.

Now I confeſs, I am much to ſeek what this Hereſie of *Tritheiſm* is. It is not *Paganiſm*, for the Heathens did not ſtint themſelves in the Number of their Gods; they were *Polytheiſts*, not *Tritheiſts*, even the *Platoniſts* themſelves, though they own'd a Trinity, a τὸ Θεῖον, or one Divinity, which extended it ſelf to Three, which was eſſentially diſtinguiſh'd from all created Nature, and from all their Creature Gods; but they worſhipped many Gods beſides, as the reſt of the *Pagan* World did. *Tritheiſm* was never charg'd upon any Men but the Worſhippers of the Holy and ever Bleſſed Trinity, and it was charg'd upon them from the beginning by *Pagans* and Hereticks. The fear of this made *Noetus* and *Sabellius* deny three real ſubſtantial Perſons in the Trinity, and made *Arius* deny the true eternal Divinity of the Son, and Holy Spirit: But the Catholick Fathers deſpis'd this Charge, and owned three diſtinct real ſubſtantial Perſons, each of them by himſelf to be true and perfect God, but not Three Gods, but One God: For thus the Scripture had taught them to believe and ſpeak, that there is

but One God, and there are Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, who have all the Perfections of the Deity diſtinctly in themſelves. So that this *Tritheiſm* is a Chriſtian Hereſie if it be one, and was never charged upon Chriſtians by Chriſtians for ſeveral Ages, but only by Hereticks. The moſt Orthodox Chriſtians were always moſt charg'd with it; and ſome to avoid this Charge, turn'd Hereticks, and were condemn'd for ſuch by the Catholick Church.

It is true, in the declining Monkiſh Ages of the Church, we ſometimes hear of theſe *Tritheiſts*; but it is a very dark part of Story, and I never cou'd find a ſatisfactory Account what their Opinions were, or why they were call'd ſo: It is not improbable but that they might fall into the Hands of ſome malicious Animadverter, who by Zeal and Faction might procure a new Name and Hereſie to be decreed them; for there is no new thing under the Sun. But this has made me apt to ſuſpect, that thoſe who have been charg'd with Tritheiſm, for profeſſing the Faith and Worſhip of the ever bleſſed Trinity, have been the moſt Orthodox Believers; and that thoſe who have ſo minc'd the Matter as to eſcape the Charge of Tritheiſm from Hereticks, have been Hereticks themſelves: A real ſubſtantial Trinity, in which each Perſon is by himſelf perfect God, has always been charged by Hereticks with Tritheiſm, for Three, each of whom is true and perfect God, they ſay are Three Gods; and yet this is the true Chriſtian Trinity: But though Men may laugh at a Trinity of Modes, you ſhall never hear them charge it with Tritheiſm; and what Hereticks, who own but one perſonal God, cannot charge with

Tritheiſm

Tritheism, is no Christian Trinity; that is, has not Three Persons, each of which is true and perfect God: So far are those Gentlemen mistaken, who think it a piece of Art and Prudence to avoid all Expressions which Hereticks charge with Tritheism; for then they must renounce all Words, which contain and express the true Catholick Faith.

At least I think, this should warn all Men, who are not disguis'd Atheists and Infidels under the profession of Christianity, to have a care of ridiculing Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be reveng'd of these Tritheist Hereticks, as the Animadverter profanely does, who so often scoffs at me for my Three Gods, who never own'd any other God than Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and pities the *Socinians* as an unequal Match for me, because they have but One God, and I have Three; nay compares Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to *Pagan* Gods, when he tells the World, that I curse him *by my Gods*; which is a manifest and impious Allusion to *Goliath's* cursing *David* by his Gods. Can he think that the Dispute about Three Modes, or Three Minds in the Unity of the Godhead can justifie such Blasphemies as these, against *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?* or is this to be suffered in a Christian Church? Whether I curse him or not, (and I thank God, I curse no Man, but pray for my worst Enemies) he may justly fear that such Blasphemies will bring the Curse of the ever Blessed Trinity on him; and that will be no Jeast.

No Man, who believes but One Divine Nature, which is originally in the Father, and is substantially communicated by the Father to the Son, as a distinct subsisting Person, by an eternal and ineffable

Generation; and to the Holy Ghoſt by an eternal and ſubſtantial Proceſſion from Father and Son, can be a Tritheiſt, whatever inconvenient Expreſſions he may uſe, unleſs the Doctrine of the Trinity it ſelf be Tritheiſm.

But let us conſider the reaſon of this Charge a little more particularly. They ask us, Whether an eternal and infinite Mind be not true and perfect God? Yes, moſt certainly; and for this reaſon we muſt aſſert, that the Son is an eternal infinite Mind, becauſe he is true and perfect God. But if one infinite Mind is true and perfect God, are not Three infinite Minds Three Gods? This is eaſily anſwer'd, as far as we are concern'd to anſwer theſe Men, only by changing *Minds* for *Perſons*. Is not an eternal, infinite Perſon true and perfect God? and if every eternal Perſon, as a diſtinct Perſon, be true and perfect God, are not Three ſuch diſtinct Perſons Three Gods? The Objection is the ſame; and let them but anſwer for themſelves, and they anſwer for us.

But if each diſtinct Perſon, and each diſtinct Mind is true and perfect God, why may not the Term *God* be number'd and diſtinguiſh'd as Perſons and Minds are? Why may we not ſay that there are Three Gods as well as that there are Three Perſons, or Three Minds? This is the true Difficulty, which as much affects the Doctrine of the Trinity it ſelf, as any Terms or Expreſſions about it, whether *Three Perſons* or *Three Minds*: Nay though we give no Name to theſe Three, the Difficulty is the ſame; for if we own Three, each of whom is true and perfect God, why are not theſe Three three Gods, when each of them is diſtinctly and by himſelf

ſelf, true and perfect God? Now not to diſpute this Matter with the *Socinians*, which is not my preſent Buſineſs, there is a very plain Account to be given of this to thoſe who acknowledge a Trinity; why we may ſay that there are Three infinite Minds and Spirits, each of which is true and perfect God, and yet muſt not, and ought not to ſay, that there are Three Gods.

The Reaſon, why we may ſay, that there are Three diſtinct infinite Minds, is, becauſe there are Three, each of whom is a diſtinct infinite Mind, and Three, each of whom is a diſtinct Mind, are Three diſtinct Minds; but the Reaſon, why we muſt not ſay, there are Three Gods, is not, becauſe there are not Three, each of whom is diſtinctly, and by himſelf, true and perfect God, as every infinite Mind is, for that is Sabellianiſm; but becauſe there is but one and the ſame Divinity, or Godhead, the μία θεότης in them all; and therefore though there are three diſtinct Perſons, or Minds, each of whom is diſtinctly, and by himſelf (μοναδικῶς) God, yet there are not Three Gods, but One God, or One Divinity: And if they will not allow, that the ſame One Divinity or Godhead, may be entirely, and indiviſible and inſeparably in Three diſtinct Perſons or Minds, there is an End of a Trinity in Unity, of Three Perſons and One God. For if the whole Divine Nature cannot ſubſiſt intirely, indiviſibly, and inſeparably, and yet diſtinctly in Three, either there cannot be Three, each of whom is diſtinctly and by himſelf God, or there cannot be one God; whereas the ſcripture Notion of the Unity of God, is not ſuch an Unity as is only in one Perſon, for then it could not enjoyn the Faith and Worſhip of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt;

Ghoſt; but ſuch an Unity as can be between Three, when the ſame One Divine Nature, is wholly and intirely communicated by the eternal Father, to the eternal Son, and by Father and Son to the eternal Spirit; without any Diviſion or Separation; and that which is communicated whole and intire, without Diviſion or Separation, makes no Number, for it is but One ſtill. A Mind, and Mind, and Mind, muſt be three Minds, or Perſons, by reaſon of their diſtinct ſubſiſtence, which belong to them as three; but God, and God, and God, as ſome of the antient Fathers ſpeak, are not Three Gods, but One God, becauſe the ſame One Divinity (*totus ex toto*, ὅλος ἐξ ὅλου, as both the *Latin* and *Greek* Fathers ſpeak, concerning the Generation of the Son) is whole, intire, indiviſible, inſeparable, in all Three; and Three diſtinct, whole, inſeparable, ſames, how hard ſoever it may be to conceive, as to the Manner of it, is the moſt natural and intelligible Notion of three and one; and this is the Catholick Notion of a Trinity in Unity. I forbear proſecuting this any farther here, becauſe I ſhall do it at large elſewhere.

4. The next Charge is, that it is *Diſagreeing and contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholick Church.* I am truly ſorry for this, becauſe it muſt unavoidably reflect on their Skill in Antiquity, and the Doctrine of the Catholick Church; but if the Animadverter has impoſed upon them in this too, they muſt thank themſelves, and take what follows: I ſhall not multiply Teſtimonies in this Cauſe at preſent, becauſe I have a Treatiſe by me, which is near finiſhed, upon this very Subject, to give an Account of the Judgment of Catholick Fathers, and Councils con-

concerning a real and ſubſtantial Trinity, and what their Notion of Thritheiſm is. The Matter appeared to me ſo plain, and demonſtrable, that I began to be weary of it, as an unneceſſary Work; but this Decree has convinc'd me of the contrary, and I now thank God, that I am ſo well prepared to juſtifie the true antient Catholick Faith, againſt the Pretences of thoſe, who judge of the Doctrine of the Catholick Church by Inſpiration or Propheſie, without knowing what the Catholick Fathers have ſaid about it.

As Confident as theſe Heads are, of the Doctrine of the Catholick Church; thoſe, even of their Mind, who have looked into the Fathers, are not willing to ſtand to their Judgment in this Cauſe: Some of the *Ante-Nicene* Fathers, they give up to the *Arians*, and they know not what to think of the *Nicene* Fathers themſelves; they ſpoke incautiouſly, and bordered very near upon Tritheiſm; nay, ſome of them, they think, were down right Tritheiſts; and they are in the right, for they were all ſo to a man, in this modern notion of Tritheiſm, that I was glad to find, they would own the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, and put the Cauſe upon that iſſue.

The preſent Diſpute is about *Three diſtinct infinite Minds, and Subſtances in the Trinity*, whether this be the Catholick Doctrine, or Catholick Language; now, I ſuppoſe, if it appear, that they owned Three diſtinct Subſtances, both Name and Thing, there will be no Diſpute about three Minds, for the Subſtance of the Deity can be no other, than infinite Mind.

Now

Now this is a Wonderfull Diſpute, when the School-Men themſelves own the Three Divine Perſons to be Three Subſtances, though they ſay, they are (not meer Relations without a Subject) but *relative Subſtances*, and we ſay ſo too: That their Subſtances, as their Perſons, ſubſiſt in an inſeparable Union, and Relation, to each other: But *relative Subſtances*, Subſtances, which are not abſolute and independent, but eſſentially related to each other, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are Subſtances ſtill, and three diſtinct Subſtances, as they are diſtinct Perſons.

But this is not our preſent Inquiry, what the Doctrine of the Schools is, but what was the Doctrine of the Primitive Fathers.

Now it is evident beyond all poſſibility of Denial, that the Catholick Fathers, one and all, did aſſert Three ſubſtantial Perſons in the Trinity, againſt the Hereſie of *Sabellius*, who owned but one ſubſtantial Perſon, with Three Names, according to his different Appearances: now beſides, that it is impoſſible to make ſenſe of Three ſubſtantial Perſons, without three perſonal Subſtances, for τρία ὑποστατα muſt ſignifie Three Subſtances; had not theſe Fathers underſtood it in the Senſe and Notion of three Subſtances, they had not oppoſed *Sabellius*, whoſe fundamental Principle was the one ſingular, ſolitary, Subſtance of the Deity.

They aſſerted indeed *one Subſtance* of the Deity againſt *Arius*, but it was only in that ſenſe, in which *Arius* denied the *One Subſtance:* He owned the Son to be a ſubſtantial Perſon, who had a diſtinct Subſtance of his own, and this the Nicene Fathers never quarelled with him for; but

but he denied, that the Substance of the Son was ἐξ οὐσίας, of the Substance of the Father but perfectly of a different Kind and Nature, as not begotten of his Father's Substance, but made by his Power. In Opposition to this Heresie, the Fathers taught, not one singular Substance in God, which is Sabellianism, but such an Oneness of Substance, as we know not how to express otherwise, than by a specifick Sameness and Unity, tho' that does not answer the compleat Notion of the Divine Unity; but this is one Way the Fathers commonly express it, by εἶδος and *genus*, and such like Words, as among us signifie the specifick Unity of Nature; and therefore they tell us, that by the *Homoousion* they only meant, that the Son was so of the same one Substance with the Father, that he is *God of God*, *Light of Light*, *very God of very God*; that is, true and perfect God, as his Father is true and perfect God, considered in his own Person, as distinct from his Father; that he is not ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων created out of nothing, as all Creatures are, but is truly begotten of the Substance of his Father, and in that Sense Consubstantial, or of one Substance with him, as all other Sons are Consubstantial with their Fathers. Now had not this been a very wise Dispute on both sides, if the *Catholicks*, as well as the *Arians*, had not allowed, that the Son had a Substance of his own, proper and appropriate to his own Person, and as distinct from the Personal Substance of the Father, as the Person of the Son is distinct from the Person of the Father, to contend whence he had his Substance; of the Substance of the Father, or created out of Nothing, when he has no Substance

at all of his own, proper and peculiar to him as a Son?

One would think theſe two Extremes of *Sabellianiſm* and *Arianiſm*, both which were rejected with equal Abhorrence by the Catholick Fathers, might ſatisfie any Man what their Judgment was about a Trinity in Unity. For if theſe Fathers underſtood both theſe Hereſies, and rejected them both, aſſerted three ſubſtantial Perſons, in oppoſition to *Sabellius*, and one Subſtance, in oppoſition to *Arius*, the Catholick Faith muſt lie between theſe two extremes; and yet it is demonſtrable that there is but one Medium between them. If it be Hæreſy to ſay, that there is but One Perſonal Subſtance in the Deity, as *Sabellius* aſſerted, then three diſtinct ſubſtantial Perſons muſt have three diſtinct perſonal Subſtances: For this is the direct contradiction to the *Sabellian* Hereſie of one Subſtance; If the *Arians* deny'd one Subſtance, not in the *Sabellian* Notion of One Subſtance, but as one Subſtance ſignifies perfectly the ſame Divine Nature in Father and Son, then *One Subſtance*, as it is aſſerted by the *Nicene* Fathers, in oppoſition to the *Arians*, muſt ſignifie not one perſonal Subſtance, but One Divine Nature, which is perfectly alike, and the ſame in Father and Son. I challenge any Man living (always excepting the Wonder-working Animadverter) to ſhew me any Medium between the One Subſtance, or the One Perſon, of *Sabellius*, and the Three Subſtances of different Natures and Species of the *Arians*, but only the true Catholick Faith, of Three ſubſtantial Perſons, or Three perſonal Subſtances, of one and the ſame Nature, both for kind, and by Generation and Proceſſion.

The reaſon of the thing is plain and evident, which is the moſt I intend at preſent; for I ſhall reſerve Authorities, as I intimated before, for a particular Treatiſe, which, if God permit, ſhall ſoon follow this; and therefore St. *Hilary*, and the *Alexandrian* Synod, under the great *Athanaſius*, after the Catholick Biſhops were recall'd from Baniſhment, and reſtor'd to their Sees by *Julian the Apoſtate*, ſhall ſerve now.

The Diſpute is concerning *One Subſtance*, *and Three Subſtances*, in the Deity; and it may be reſolv'd into theſe three Queſtions. 1. Whether the Son, as begotten of his Father, have a Subſtance and Nature proper to his own Perſon, which is not the Perſonal Nature and Subſtance of the Father. 2. Whether Three ſuch Perſons, who have, each of them, a perſonal Nature and Subſtance of his own, may be call'd Three Subſtances. 3. In what ſence then they are one Subſtance? Whoever reads *St. Hilary de Syn. adv. Arianos*, will find all theſe Queſtions fully and expreſly reſolv'd, I ſhall give but ſome few Inſtances of each.

As for the firſt, he tells us, that *Life in the Father* is Subſtance, and Life in the Son which is begotten of the Father, is Eſſence or Subſtance; and that Life begotten of Life, is Eſſence born of Eſſence; and owns this as a univerſal Maxim, which holds true in all Births: That that which is born receives a Nature of its own from the Nature, which begets, and ſubſiſts in its own Nature; that the begotten

* Quod vita in patre hic intelligitur ſubſtantia ſignificata; vita quoq; in Unigenito, quæ ex patre generata eſt eſſentia

intellecta —— quod enim in utroq; vita eſt, id in utroq; ſignificatur eſſentia & vita quæ generatur ex vita, id eſt, eſſentia quæ de eſſentia naſcitur —— natæ & gignentis eſſentiæ, id eſt, vitæ quæ habetur & data eſt. ——

† Quia omnis nativitas quæcunq; eſt, in naturam ſuam ex naturâ gignente conſiſtit.

‖ Ex natura enim generante naturam ſumpſit genita natura.

Nature receives its Nature from the Nature, which begets: And giving an Account why Wiſdom ſays * that ſhe was both created and begotten: The firſt he tells us, is to exclude all corporeal Paſſions from the Divine Generation; that the Nature of the Father ſuffers no change or diminution in the Generation of the Son, no more than in the Works of Creation; and by being begotten is ſignified, that the Son receives his Nature not by Creation, but by Birth; and has a legitimate and proper Subſtance of his own begotten Nature from God the Father.

* ſed quia Dei filius non corporalis partitudinis eſt genitus exemplo, ſed ex perfecto Deo perfectus, Deus natus eſt, idcirco ait creatam ſe eſſe ſapientia; omnes in generatione ſua corporales paſſiones exeludens; at verò ut oſtenderet, non creationis in ſe, ſed nativitatis naturam eſſe, ſubjecit & genitam, ut cùm creatam ſe & genitam confitetur, abſolutam nativitatis ſuæ intelligentiam præſtaret, dum indemutabilem patris naturam in creatione ſignificat, & legitimam & propriam ex Deo patre genitæ ſuæ naturæ oſtendit eſſe ſubſtantiam.

Once more; In one of theſe Oriental Creeds, they anathematize thoſe who make the * Eternal Subſtance of the only begotten Son of the Father to be the unbegotten Subſtance of God, thereby making the Son to be the Father.

Et ſiquis intemporalem unigeniti filii de patre ſubſtantiam, ad innaſcibilem Dei eſſentiam referat, quaſi filium patrem dicens, anathema ſit.

This St. *Hilary* explains and approves, and acquaints us with the † Occaſion of this Decree, *viz.* The Catholicks aſſerting the eternal Generation of the Son, that he was begotten before all Time, and in no

† Dediſſe ſuperior definitio occaſionem hæreticis videbatur, cùm tempus nativitatis filii negaretur, quia nefas eſſet ſi pater eſſet in tempore: in tempore autem eſſet, ſi filius tempori ſubderetur: ut per hanc opportunitatem temporis abnegati, ſub filii nuncupatione pater, qui innaſcibilis eſſet, ſingularis atq; unicus, ipſe ſibi & pater & filius prædicaretur, quia ubi naſcendi tempus excluditur, illic opinio videtur innaſcibilitatis admitti, ut natus non putetur, cujus nativitas non ſit in tempore. Idcirco ne per hanc occaſionem temporis abnegati hæreſis unionis irreperet, & hæc impietas damnatur, quæ audeat intemporalem nativitatem ad unicam & ſingularem innaſcibilis eſſentiæ referre ſubſtantiam. cùm aliud ſit intemporalem eſſe, aliud ſit eſſe non natum; quorum unum habeat (licet extra tempus) nativitatem, aliud ipſum ſibi, ad id quod eſt, ſolus atq; idem Autor æternus ſit.

Time;

Time; ſome Hereticks took advantage of this, to deny that there is any begotten Subſtance of the Son, but only the unbegotten Subſtance of the Father, and that under the denomination of the Son, the Father, who is unbegotten, and but one ſingular Perſon, is both Father and Son to himſelf: For to be born in no time ſeems to ſignifie, not to be born at all: this he calls *The Hereſie of Union*, or Sabellianiſm, which this Decree condemns, whereas, as he adds, to be eternal, without any temporal beginning, and to be unbegotten, are two very different things; that which is eternal may be begotten, tho' not in time; but that which is unbegotten, is the ſole eternal Author of its own being, and all that he is.

This I think is home to the purpoſe, to deny that the Son has a begotten Subſtance, proper and peculiar to himſelf as a Son; or to ſay, that the Son has no other Subſtance but the unbegotten Subſtance of the Father, is Sabellianiſm; and which ought farther to be obſerved, to ſay, that the Father and Son have not a diſtinct Subſtance of their own, but that the unbegotten Subſtance of the Father is the Subſtance of the Son, makes Father and Son but one Perſon: which ſhews that theſe Fathers and St. *Hilary* never dreamt of three Perſons in one ſingular Subſtance. Now if the three Perſons in the Trinity are really diſtinct in ſubſtance, and it is Hereſy to ſay, that the unbegotten Subſtance of the Father is the Subſtance of the Son, any man would wonder, what Hæreſie it ſhould be to ſay, that there are three diſtinct perſonal Subſtances in the Trinity.

But to put this Matter out of doubt, St. *Hilary* in the next place expreſly vindicates the Synod of * *Antioch*

* Hiſq; nominibus (patris, & filii, & ſpiritus ſancti) non ſimpliciter, neq; otioſis propoſitis, ſed ſignificantibus diligenter propriam uniuſcujuſq; nominatorum ſubſtantiam & ordinem & gloriam, ut ſint quidem per ſubſtantiam tria ———

tioch for attributing a proper Subſtance to each Divine Perſon, and affirming, that they are Three in Subſtance, which he renders by *Three Subſtances*, whereby he ſays, they did not mean Three diverſe Subſtances of different Kinds and Natures, but Three Subſtances, in oppoſition to the *Sabellian* Hereſie; which, reviv'd again after the *Nicene* Council, and gave theſe three Names to the Father, and by a Trinity of meer Names, without a ſubſiſting Cauſe or Subject for each Name, deſtroyed the truth and reality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and therefore they ſaid, there were Three Subſtances, thereby meaning three ſubſiſting Perſons; not dividing and ſeparating the Subſtance of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, by a diverſity and diſſimilitude of Eſſences.

Volens igitur congregata ſanctorum ſynodus impietatem eam perimere, quæ veritatem Patris, & Filii, & Spiritus Sancti, nominum numero eluderet, ut non ſubſiſtente cauſa uniuſcujuſq; nominis, triplex nuncupatio obtineret ſub falſitate nominum unionem —— Idcirco tres ſubſtantias eſſe dixerunt ſubſiſtentium perſonas per ſubſtantias edocentes, non ſubſtantiam Patris, & Filii, & Spiritus ſancti diverſitate diſſimilis eſſentiæ ſeparantes.

So that St. *Hilary* thought, that Three Subſtances, when they are not uſed in an *Arian* ſenſe, to ſignifie a diverſity of Nature, but only to ſignifie Three ſubſtantial ſubſiſting Perſons, in oppoſition to *Sabellius*, are very Catholick Words, and contain a true Catholick ſenſe: in this ſenſe, and for the very ſame reaſon we uſe theſe Expreſſions of Three diſtinct infinite Minds, and Three Subſtances: And I hope theſe Heads will not take it amiſs, if One St. *Hilary* have more Authority with me than all they together.

3. As for *One Subſtance*, which was taught by the *Nicene* Council, and inſerted into their Creed, St. *Hilary* very plainly and frequently tells us, in what ſenſe we are to underſtand it: that there is one Subſtance

ſtance of the ſame Kind and Nature, *in genere naturæ, & ſecundum proprietatem naturæ*; not one Subſtance, as that ſignifies one ſubſiſting Perſon; but as it ſignifies perfectly the ſame Nature, in every thing alike, without the leaſt difference or variation, that the * *Homoouſion* ſignifies one Nature perfectly alike, and the ſame by Natural Propagation; becauſe the Eſſence of the Son is from no other Cauſe, but the Eſſence of the Father; and therefore Father and Son may both be ſaid to be of one Nature or Subſtance.

* Idcirco autem unius ſubſtantiæ, non ut unus ſubſiſtat aut ſolus, ſed ut ex ſubſtantiâ Dei natus, non aliunde ſubſiſtat, neve in aliquâ diſſidentis ſubſtantiæ diverſitate ſubſiſtat.

Aut aliud hic teſtatur homouſion, quàm ut una & indiſſimilis duum ſit ſecundum naturæ propaginem eſſentia, quia eſſentia filii non ſit aliunde; quæ quia aliunde non eſt, unius rectè eſſe ambo creduntur eſſentiæ, quia ſubſtantiam nativitatis filius non habeat, niſi de paternæ autoritate naturæ. Credamus & dicamus eſſe unam ſubſtantiam, ſed per naturæ proprietatem, non ad ſignificationem impiæ unionis; una ſit ex ſimilitudine, non ex ſolitudine.

And for the ſake of the Charge of *Tritheiſm*, which the Animadverter makes ſuch a Noiſe with, it will be neceſſary to obſerve, that St. *Hilary* gives the ſame account of the Unity of the Godhead, as he does of the Unity of the Divine Subſtance and indeed they muſt be one in the ſame ſenſe, for one divine Subſtance is one God.

* The *Sardican* Synod anathematiz'd thoſe who ſaid there were Three Gods: And St. *Hilary* gives this account of it, that ſpeaking properly, the Divine Subſtance or Nature will not admit of the plural Number, to ſay, that there are more Gods than

* Anathematizant namq; eos, qui tres Deos dicunt, quia ſecundum naturæ veritatem, numerum nuncupationum ſubſtantia iſta non recipit, niſi ut in hominibus & Angelis ſolet —— cæterùm in natura Dei Deus unus eſt, ita tamen ut & filius Deus ſit, quia in eo natura non differens ſit; & cùm Deus ex Deo ſit, non poteſt non uterq; Deus eſſe, quorum per generis differentiam non diſcernatur eſſentia. Numerus autem nominis in nuncupatione reſpuitur, quia non eſt in naturæ qualitate diverſitas, cùm igitur Anathema ſit duos deos dicens, & anathema ſit filium Deum denegans, abſolute oſtenditur unius ad utrumq; nominis unitatem de proprietate in differentis eſſe ſubſtantiæ.

than One, excepting when the Title of God is given to Men or Angels, by way of Honour, not of Nature: But in the Nature of God, there is but One God; yet ſo that the Son is God, becauſe he has the ſame Nature, without any unlikeneſs or difference, with his Father; and when there is God of God, it cannot be but that each of them muſt be God, becauſe their Nature is not diſtinguiſh'd by a different Kind or Species; and when he is anathematiz'd, who ſays there are two Gods, and he alſo is anathematiz'd who denies the Son to be God, it is manifeſt that the ſame Name of God, and One God, is apply'd to both of them, upon account of the ſame Nature, without the leaſt difference or diverſity. * And adds, that leaſt the Doctrine of One God ſhould ſeem to teach that there is but one ſingular Subſiſtance of one ſolitary God without his Son; The ſame Synod condemns thoſe alſo, who under pretence of owning but One God, profeſs only One ſingular and ſolitary God the Father, under the Name of Father and Son; whereas the Father who begets, and the Son who is born, are to be acknowledg'd One God, upon account of the ſame Nature in both, without the leaſt difference or variation.

* Tamen ne rurſum unius Dei prædicatio, unicam ac ſine progenie ſuâ ſolitarii Dei velit affirmare ſubſtantiam, ſtatim etiam hanc condemnat temeritatem, quæ quia Deus unus eſt, unum ac ſolitarium Deum patrem, habentem in ſe nomen patris & filii confitetur. Cum in generante patre & naſcente filio, Deus unus eſſet ob indifferentis ab invicem naturæ ſubſtantiam prædicandus.

Cùm in damnatione ſit, patrem & filium duos Deos dicere, & rurſum anathema ſit, filium Deum negare, ſubſtantiæ diverſæ alterius ab alterâ opinio in prædicandis Diis duobus excluditur, non enim eſt alia præter illam Dei patris, ex qua Dei filius Deus intemporalis eſt natus, eſſentia.

Non enim religioſa unitas nominis ex indifferentis naturæ eſſentia conſtituta, perſonam genitæ ademit eſſentiæ, ut unica ac ſingularis Dei eſſentia per unionem nominis intelligatur: cùm utriuſq; eſſentiæ nomen unum; id eſt, Deus unus, ob indifferentiæ in utroq; naturæ indiſſimilem ſubſtantiam prædicetur.

Were

Were it not to ſhorten this Diſcourſe, I could eaſily furniſh my Readers with Numerous Quotations to the ſame purpoſe, out of St. *Hilary*, (to whom I now confine my ſelf, and particularly to his Book *de Synodis*, that theſe Authorities may be the more eaſily found all together) to prove, That the Catholick Notion of One Divine Subſtance, and One God, does not ſignify One Perſonal Subſtance, nor One ſingular ſolitary God, who is but One Perſon; but there is One Divine Subſtance, and One God, as the ſame Divine Nature is communicated whole and entire by the Father to the Son, and by Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, without the leaſt difference, or change, or ſeparation: Which I ſhall explain more at large elſewhere.

Thus much for St. *Hilary*, who has always been allowed a Credible Witneſs of the Catholick Faith; for which he ſuffered Baniſhment under *Conſtantius*, and is now condemned for a Heretick by the *Oxford* Heads.

But it is more wonderful to me, that men who underſtand what *Hypoſtaſis* ſignifies, and in what ſenſe it was uſed by the *Nicene* Fathers, ſhould condemn the Phraſe of *Three Subſtances* in the Trinity, as Falſe, Impious, and Heretical, when τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις, or Three Hypoſtaſes, which is the Catholick Language, is neither better nor worſe than Three Subſtances. In the *Nicene* Council it ſelf, οὐσία and ὑπόστασις are uſed in the ſame ſenſe, and both ſignify Subſtance: And *Petavius* owns, that all the Ancient Fathers uſed *Hypoſtaſis* in no other ſenſe, but to ſignify Subſtance; and then Three *Hypoſtaſes* are *Three Subſtances*. And when afterwards they more nicely diſtinguiſhed between οὐσία and ὑπόστασις, they ſtill uſed *Hypoſtaſis* in the notion of Subſtance, that which did actually ſubſiſt; which is therefore often rendred by the *Latins exiſtentia*.

But to ſet aſide other Obſervations, the *Alexandrian*

Athanaſii Ep ad Antiochenſes T. 1. p. 574 Et Concil. T. 2 p. 810.

Synod under *Athanaſius* is ſufficient to put an end to this Diſpute. When the Catholick Biſhops were recalled from Baniſhment by *Julian*, ſeveral of them ſtopt at *Alexandria*, and met in Council to adviſe about the broken ſtate of the Church: Among other things that fell under conſideration, there had a Diſpute happened among the Catholicks themſelves, concerning the μία ὑπόστασις, and τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις, whether they ought to ſay, That there is but One Subſtance in the Trinity; or, That there are Three Subſtances; for ſo it is plain that both ſides underſtood *Hypoſtaſis* in the notion of Subſtance. To compoſe this Difference, the Synod called both Parties before them, and examined them in what ſenſe they uſed theſe words.

As for thoſe who ſaid there were Three *Hypoſtaſes* in the Trinity, they asked them, Whether by this they meant, as the *Arians* did, Three *Hypoſtaſes* of a different Kind and Nature, ſubſiſting by themſelves abſolutely and independently, as perfectly divided and ſeparated from each other, as other Creatures, and as the Children of men are; or as thoſe things which have different Natures, as Gold, and Silver, and Braſs? Or whether by Three *Hypoſtaſes* they meant, as ſome other Hereticks did, Three Principles, or Three Gods? All this they profeſſed they had neither ſaid nor thought. And being asked again, Why they then uſed thoſe Expreſſions of Three Subſtances? They anſwered, Becauſe they believed in the Holy Trinity, not a Trinity of Names, but a Real Subſiſting Trinity; a Father, who really and actually is, and ſubſiſts; a Son, who in truth and reality is a ſubſtantial ſubſiſting Son; and the Holy Spirit, who actually is, and ſubſiſts: That they never ſaid, There are Three Gods, or Three Principles, but owned the Holy Trinity, and but one Godhead, one Principle, and the Son conſubſtantial to the Father; and the Holy Spirit neither a Creature, nor of a dif-

different Nature, but genuinely and inſeparably of the ſame Nature with Father and Son. All this was approved of as very Orthodox. And then the Synod examined thoſe who affirmed, That there was but One Subſtance in the Trinity, What they meant by it? Whether they underſtood it, as *Sabellius* did, to deny the Real Subſiſtence of the Son and Holy Spirit, to make an Unſubſtantial Son, and an Unſubſiſting Spirit? This they alſo denied; and told the Synod, that they thought *Hypoſtaſis* ſignified the ſame with *Ouſia*, Eſſence, Subſtance, Nature: And therefore they owned but one *Hypoſtaſis* or Subſtance, becauſe the Son is of the Subſtance of the Father, and by reaſon of the Identity of Nature between Father and Son; for they believed but One Divinity, and one Divine Nature; and not one Nature of the Father, and another different Nature of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This Explication alſo was approved by the Synod; and thus this matter was reconciled: Thoſe who taught Three Subſtances in the Trinity, and thoſe who believed but one Subſtance, when they had given their ſeveral Explications, were both owned by the Synod, and owned each other for Catholick Chriſtians, and both Condemned *Arius* and *Sabellius*; though the Synod thought it better to adhere ſtrictly to the words of the *Nicene* Creed; but ſoon after they diſtinguiſhed between οὐσία and ὑπόστασις; and then Three *Hypoſtaſes* (ſtill in the notion of Three Subſtances) and One Nature, was the Catholick Language; which St. *Baſil* gives a large account of, *Ep.* 300. of which more elſewhere. So that *Athanaſius*, and thoſe Glorious Confeſſors for the *Nicene* Faith, in the *Alexandrian* Synod, owned Three Subſtances in the very ſame ſenſe in which we now uſe thoſe words, to contain the true Catholick Faith; and if they knew what the Doctrine of the Catholick Church was, our *Oxford* Heads are out in their gueſs.

5. The laſt Charge is, That *Three diſtinct Minds and Subſtances* is *eſpecially contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of* England, *publickly received.* What they may mean by *publickly received*, I can't tell; there may be ſome Doctrines too publickly received in the Church of *England*, which are not the Doctrines of the Church; and I doubt *Sabellianiſm* is one of them: But if they mean by *publickly received*, the Doctrine of our Articles and Creeds; this is the very ſame with the Doctrine of the Catholick Church. We make profeſſion of the *Nicene* Faith every Week, and that aſſerts a Real and Subſtantial Trinity, if *Athanaſius* underſtood it.

The only pretence, I can gueſs, they had for this charge, if they thought of any themſelves, muſt be the Form of the *Athanaſian* Creed, which will not permit us to ſay that in the Plural Number of all Three Divine Perſons, which it allows us to attribute diſtinctly to each diſtinct Perſon in the Singular Number; we may ſay, the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghoſt Almighty, but muſt not ſay that there are three Almighties, but one Almighty. But will they hence frame an Univerſal Rule, That nothing muſt be ſaid of the Holy Trinity in the Plural Number, conſidered as Three? We will not attribute any thing to the Holy Trinity in the Plural Number, which this Creed forbids; we will not ſay, there are Three Almighties, Three Eternals, Three Omnipotents, Three Infinites, Three Gods, or Three Lords; but this Creed does not forbid us ſaying, There are Three Minds, or Three Subſtances; nay, it teaches us to ſay, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις, which as you have already heard, in the Language of the *Nicene* Age, and more expreſly in After Ages, ſignified Three Subſtances, and therefore muſt do ſo in this Creed.

The reaſon given in the Creed againſt this Plural Prædi-

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cation is, Becauſe there is but One God, and therefore ſuch terms, as immediately and directly multiply the Deity and Godhead, muſt not be expreſt Plurally; and thus the Plural Prædication of any Divine Perfections in the abſtract does; Three Omnipotents, Three Infinites, Three Eternals, which are Equivalent to Three Omnipotencies, Three Infinities, Three Eternities; and they to Three Deities, and Three Godheads, or Three Divine Natures; but though we cannot diſtinguiſh between the Perſon, and the Divinity, or Divine Nature of that Perſon, for there is no Compoſition in God, or in a Divine Perſon, as there is in Creatures; yet when the ſame Divine Nature, communicated from the Father to the Son, and from Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, ſubſiſts diſtinctly, tho inſeparably whole and entire in Three; and that which really and actually ſubſiſts, is Mind and Subſtance, with reſpect to theſe Three Subſiſtencies, they are and muſt be Three Minds and Subſtances, though with reſpect to the ſameneſs and identity of the Divine Nature, which is Whole, and Entire and Inſeparable, and therefore but One in all, they are but One, not Three Gods.

This is all the ſenſe I can make of that known diſtinction between Subſtantives and Adjectives in a Plural Prædication; That we may ſay, there are Three who Create, but not Three Creators; Three, who are Omnipotent, but not three Omnipotents, *&c.* that in theſe Adjective Prædications, we conſider the Divine Perſon, Mind or Subſtance, as a ſubject of Inhæſion, and theſe Divine Perfections as Eſſential Properties or Attributes, which may and muſt be numbred with the Subjects in which they are; but Subſtantives have a more abſolute ſenſe, and include pure nature, without relation to different Subjects; and therefore to uſe them Plurally, is to multiply Nature, to make more than One Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehenſible, Omnipotent Nature,

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and consequently to multiply Gods. But from this very distinction we learn, that there are Three Suppositums or Subjects (and these they will easily be owned to be) three Minds and Substances, to which all the Perfections of the Deity belong; for whereas these Divine Perfections are Predicated Adjectively, they must suppose a Subject to which they belong; and they having such Perfections as can be only in a Mind, they must suppose Three distinct Minds to which they belong.

Thus I have considered, with all possible brevity, every particular of this Charge; and if these Decreeing and Heresy-making Heads will be pleased to tell me, they must own, that as they and the Assembly have ordered the matter, it was impossible for me to do otherwise, unless I would have been trampled on by every Scribler. This is a good humane reason; but I had a better reason for this than any thing meerly Personal. They have condemned the true Catholick Faith, even the Nicene Faith, which is the Faith of the Church of England, for Heresy, and they have exposed this Faith to the Scorn and Triumph of the Socinian Hereticks, who already make their Boast, That they have a Decree against the real Trinity, and they only want another against the Nominal ones, and then their work is done to their hands; tho I think, they have Decrees enow against them; even all the Fathers and Councils which condemned *Sabellius*, condemned these, and if all this be not enough, the common Sense of Mankind, of which every Plowman is a judge, condemns them: For Three Persons, who are not Three distinct Minds and Substances, is not greater Heresie than is is Nonsense.

In short, we have had these Gentlemen's Decrees, and now we expect their Reasons, which it had been much better they had thought of first, and then we should have escaped their Decree.

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